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THOMAS STORY'S
DISCOURSE

IN THE
MEETING AT HORSELYDOWN,

On the 26th Day of FEBRUARY, 1737;

CONCERNING THE
DIVERSITY OF OPINIONS

AND

DIVISIONS IN RELIGION,

Still subsisting in the

CHRISTIAN WORLD.

WITH AN

OBSERVATION,

THAT THE

UNITY OF CHRISTIANS,

Never did, nor ever will, or can stand in

UNIFORMITY OF THOUGHT OR OPINION,

BUT IN

CHRISTIAN LOVE, ONLY, &c,



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Concerning the Diversity of Opinions and Divisions in Religion, still subsisting in the Christian World.

With an Observation, that the Unity of Christians never did, nor never will, or can stand in Uniformity of Thought, or Opinion, but in Christian Love only, &c.

WE may observe, and that with deep concern of Mind, the great variety of *Notions and Opinions*, the manifold *Differences, Divisions and Uncharitableness*, still subsisting and prevailing in the Christian World; yet this Variety and Difference would not be so hurtful as it is, if we could retain, or arrive at that *Social Friendship and Christian Charity* one towards another, which the *Nature and End* of that Religion we all profess, does

require and demand : But the *Variety* of *Opinions*, especially in *Matters of Religion*, have commonly been accompanied with personal and party Dislike, Uncharitableness, and too often, even Hatred of those who differ from us in our Sentiments that way. Our various manners of Thinking depend upon our several Interests, Ways of Education, or different Degrees of Understanding, so that upon the main, it is not in our Power to think or believe as we Please, or so as to Please others, or otherwise than we do, until we are better informed ; and we ought to use all Lawful and proper Ways and Means to be rightly informed. But this is no new Thing, it hath been so from the beginning of the Christian Dispensation, and all a-long. We may find it was so in the days of the Apostles, People possessing the one, true and living God, and the Lord Christ the Son of God, differed widely at that Time, in some Things. And we may also observe the great Influence, and Effect, which Education, and early Impressions, have upon most People. Impressions of Religion, or what is so esteemed, take with us very early, and there are many who embrace unsound Opinions and Principles in Time of Youth, which they retain to the End of their Days, if they live in the World many Years, and if any Errors obtain with

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us when we are Young in Years and Judgment, they are hardly rooted out : Nothing can effectually do it, but the clear Manifestations of the Divine Light of the Essential Truth in the Understanding.

Errors in Education are commonly continued by Negligence, under a Self-Security ; many being unwilling to come to a strick and painful Enquiry into their own Principles and States ;-- But if a Man's Religion be Right, it will endure the strictest Scrutiny, and if upon a due Search it appears *to him* to be Wrong, he ought to recede from it, and retain or embrace nothing but the Truth : There is as great a mixture of Errors in the Christian World at this Day, as any Time heretofore. And Mankind are apt to be so tenacious of their acquired and imbibed Notions (if most Heterodox), so censorious of others, and so confident and forward are they to judge in favour of themselves, that wanting Charity, the most necessary Point, they, as unjust Judges, are ready to exclude all others of a different way of Thinking and Profession, even out of the Favour and Kingdom of God.—That is a very dangerous State indeed; but contrary to this, I remember what the Apostle Peter said, and I believe it is altogether true ; “ Of a Truth, I perceive, that God is no respecter
“ of

“ of Persons : But in every Nation, he that
 “ feareth him, and worketh Righteousness, is
 “ accepted with him,” Acts, ch. 10, v. 34.
 This is our Sentiment : we have never pre-
 tended that Religion is only among us, ex-
 clusive of Others ; for my own part, I do be-
 lieve, and may say, I partly understand, that
 there are some among every Sect, that might
 be named, to whom God hath regard : They
 who mind the Fear of God, and are Religious,
 doing their utmost according to their Know-
 ledge to please him, are accepted of him, un-
 der what Name soever they are distinguished
 in the World : and according to that saying
 of Christ, “ In my Father’s House there are
 “ many Mansions,” John xiv, v. 2. By
 which we may understand the various Classes,
 in which the Children of Men are ranged and
 disposed, in the course of Providence.

God is the Creator of all, the Supporter,
 Supplier and Assister of all, and it is Sincerity
 in the Heart, Truth in the inward Parts, that
 God looks at, rather than to the Exactness
 and Nicety of our Speculations or Opinions.

Divers Errors and false Opinions, have been
 introduced and propogated by Tradition
 among th Jews, before the coming of Christ
 in the Flesh, and though some of them be-
 lieved

Heved he was the Messiah, and acknowledged
 him as such, yet many rejected him as a De-
 ceiver, till after he was Crucified, risen from
 the Dead, and the Holy Spirit dispensed unto
 them who believed; that the Promises and
 Predictions of God by Moses might be
 accomplished: And though many of that
 People did afterwards believe in the Lord Je-
 sus Christ, and were made Partakers of the
 Promise of the Father by him, that is, that
 of the Holy Ghost who leadeth into all
 Truth, yet they were not led unto all Truth
 in an instant; they were not perfect ei-
 ther in Sanctification or Understanding at
 once; for there are Degrees of Manifestation,
 and Attainments in the Spirit, and Spiritual
 Knowledge and Things, so that many of them
 continued for a Time in some of their old Opi-
 nions and Traditions, not of the Nature of
 the Gospel of Christ, which remain among
 some, professing Christ until this Day. And
 many more pernicious Errors have, in the
 Course of Ages, been invented and added,
 and have obtained since in the Christian
 World, and still subsist and are maintained,
 and ever will, until the Spirit of Christ, the
 Essential Truth of God, as he is believed in,
 and duly attended and obeyed, as manifested
 in the Hearts of Mankind, clear their Un-
 derstandings from all Mistakes and Errors, as
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he gradually Sanctifies their Hearts and Minds from all Corruption. There is one Instance, in the Days of the Apostles, more particularly in my Remembrance, whereby it appears, that though some of the Jews, did believe that the Lord Jesus Christ was the Messiah promised, yet they were still of Opinion the Law was in force, and were so tenacious of it, that some of them, who preached Christ, likewise taught, that, unless they were Circumcised and kept the Law, they could not be saved, when, at the same time, it was abrogated and null by his coming, and in which they also insincerely temporised, for fear of Persecution by their perverse and unbelieving Brethren, Gal. ch. vii. v. 12, 13. Acts. ch. xv, v. 1, 5, & 24.

But the Apostle Paul, a chosen Vessel of Honour unto God, a Man excellently illuminated, a Man of Sincerity and Truth, and holy Fortitude and Courage, having no other view in preaching the Gospel, but the Glory and Honour of God and Christ, the Discharge of the Duty of his calling, his own Salvation, and the Redemption of Mankind, bear another Testimony, and preached true Doctrine, telling them plainly, and particularly the Congregation at Galatia, that if they were Circumcised, Christ should profit them nothing, and that

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that such were still Debtors to do the whole Law of Moses, which brought them back from the Liberty of the Gospel, and that they were fallen from Grace. Gal. ch. v, ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, and see also, Acts, ch. xv, ver. 1, 24. And again, returned unto the Yoke of Bondage, the Law of Ceremonies, and Cardinal Ordinances, under Statutes that were not good, Ezek. ch. xx, ver. 25. And by the works of the Law shall no Man living be justified.

This Apostle, as well as the rest of them, having by sound Doctrine, condemned that Error, proceeds to preach Salvation unto them by Faith in Christ, by whom alone they could be saved, saying, "In Christ Jesus, neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision, but Faith, which worketh by Love," Gal. ch. v, ver. 6. Circumcision therefore, or any other Ceremony of the Law, or other Ceremony invented, imitated, and imposed by Man, if they continued in them, would be so far from contributing any thing to their Salvation, that they would rather hinder, and if they did discontinue the Practice of such Things, neither would a bare departure from them, avail any thing without Faith in the Son of God.—Likewise, there are many at this Day, who have entered into the Profession of the Christian Religion occa-

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sionally,

sionally, and received divers *Notions* and *Opinions* under which they have been *Educated*, by Tradition only, from their Parents and Tutors ; and some also, by hearing public Discourses upon Points of Doctrine, so they have been accounted, and reading the Holy Scriptures, and reasoning upon them in their carnal Minds, and other Books treating of Religion, according to the various *Notions* of the Authors, true or false, and have imbibed and adopted such Things as best suited their own way of Thinking or Imaginations. And Others, being altogether *Indolent* and *Thoughtless*, sit down under the *Traditions*, or saysoes of their Fathers and Predecessors, though *Heterodox*, take them for granted, and enquire no further to the end of their Days : And some are of Opinion, that Mankind must, of Necessity be Baptized, or sprinkled with Water, in some Manner or other, or they cannot be saved. And likewise, that eating and supping Bread and Wine, in some Mode or other, in Commemoration of the Death and Sufferings of Christ, is necessary to Salvation, and by which they think they obtain Grace from God by him, and by the Omission whereof they think Men fall short of the Performance of the Ordinances of God in the Gospel.

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Now, as long as those Persons, whoever they be, and under what Denomination soever they go, or in what Class soever of Christians they are ranged, so long as they really believe in their Hearts they ought to do these Things, having been once in Use among Christians in the Time of their Minority in the Faith of Christ, they do not Sin in practising them, though they may think themselves Sinners if they should neglect them.---But if any among such, or others, should, through the Goodness of God, be favoured with the Divine and inward Manifestation of Christ, the eternal and living Substance, without the Use or Performance of those outward Things, as there are many so favoured at this Day, such are under no Obligation at all to use them any more.

And if such, who still remain ignorant of Christ, though they may believe that he is, and is a far off, and will come hereafter, and do censure, revile, and vilefy, hate and reproach, and otherwise persecute and destroy those that are thus favoured of God, and exempted from the use of those Things, they Sin against God, notwithstanding the strictest Practice of any outward Things they may think or call Ordinances of Christ: because Persecution and Destruction, on any Pretence

whatever is Immoral and Antichristian, and such are also contradicting and opposing the Work and Dispensation of God, and Liberty of the Gospel, at this Day, in and among his Children and chosen People. Again, most among us, and likewise many among other Professions, have never come under the Administration of those outward Things at all, in any Form, yet are no better by only declining or neglecting them, nor by such Omission only are they imitated into our Religion, or the Profession of those with whom they may happen to be in outward Society under any Name or Distinction. For as at that Time, neither Circumcision nor Uncircumcision availed any thing to Religion, but Faith which worketh by Love ; even so, now at this Day, neither the Administration of Water or Bread and Wine, in any Form, or by whatsoever Administrator among the Children of Men, under any Qualification whatsoever, or under whatever Circumstances as to Time or Times, Posture or Place, availeth any thing ; but the same living Faith, grounded upon the sensible operation of the Word of God, its immediate Object in that Heart where it is wrought, by the Manifestation of Divine Love.

And if we, who profess the Truth of God, the true Christian Religion, have not obtained

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tained this most precious Faith, our Profession is Vain, it is a Lie, we are *false Witnesses*, yet in our Sin and Miserable.——And therefore, let us take the good and safe Counsel of that great Apostle, to examine ourselves and prove our own selves (every one for one), whether we be in this Faith, and whether Christ be thus in us, least we profess him in vain to become in us by his Holy Spirit, and our Works give us the Lye, and declare we are Reprobates : But I trust ye are not Reprobates, but the saved of the Lord. Dear Friends, we can never be too secure, in a thing of the highest Importance to us in this World, and that which is to come.

Seeing then this Faith is the first main Point here proposed, in order to our Salvation, it implies, that there must be a proper, powerful, and saving Object, to be believed in, and Means to obtain it, without which it could not be, who, therefore, must we Mortals believe and confide in, and unto whom must we look for this Faith ? for we cannot acquire it by any Power, or Faculty, or Search of our own, we cannot believe what we please, or reject what we will.—This Faith is the Gift of God, therefore, such as have not through his Grace already obtained it, must look unto him only for it. And if we believe any thing
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of the Christian Religion, or in Christ, in any Sense or Degree (as I doubt not but that we all do) and yet not arrived at the full Experience of the blessed Effects of it in our Hearts; let such be like minded with him of old, who said unto the Son of God, in an humble mind and sense of his own Weakness, and with good desire of Improvement, "Lord, "I believe, help thou mine unbelief," Mark, ch. ix, ver. 23, 24.

And as to the Object of this Faith; the Son of God hath told us, as we have it recorded in Holy Scripture, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," John, ch. xiv, ver. 1. So that the *Father* and the *Son*, the *Lord Christ*, are the *true* and *only* Objects of this Faith, and they are One, and *he is Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son*, 1st. John, ch. 2, ver. 22. But some may have searched the Scripture concerning this Faith, and believed *there is such a Thing*, and read many other Books, and considered them, and compared one part of *Scripture* with another, and one *Book* with another, and what the Authors have wrote on this Subject; he may with much Zeal and good Intent, have gone from *Meeting* to *Meeting*, and one famed Preacher to another, and heard of many good and fine Things, delivered with *exact* connec-

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tion of Parts according to *Art*, and with very *Beautiful* and agreeable *Eloquence*, and may have a *large Collection* of *Points* and *Particulars* in his *Memory*, and in *Notes* and *References*; but does all this give the Man *Faith* that works by *Love*? No, this Man may conceive a good Opinion of those Things he *Hears* or *Reads*, and may assent in his *Head* to Matters of Fact *reported*, or the *moral Truths* of *Doc- trines*, and yet be still ignorant of the *Gift* of God; and as the Woman of Samaria was, though talking with the Saviour of the World, the *Author* and *Finisher* of that Faith, concern- ing the Religions *professed* and *contested* at that Time, and yet both Religions and the Dis- puters of them short of the Truth.

But the *Faith* which the Apostle there men- tions, as so absolutely needful, is (as I have said) the *Gift of God*. It comes by the *Opera- tion* of the *Holy Spirit of Christ*, the *Word* of Life, in the Hearts of all Mankind who are favoured with it, and this Word is in all Men; the true and essential Divine *Light*, which *lighteth* every Man that cometh into the World. And when a Man doth *feel* the Ho- ly Ghost, the Spirit of Christ, *working* in his Heart, and *shining* into his Mind, and *illumi- nating* his Understanding, the convincing and edifying *Wisdom* and *Power* of God (Christ who

who is that Wisdom and Power) and the *Father* will then be the *immediate* and *present* *Object* of the *Faith* and Mind of him, who *receives* it by this *blessed Operation*. This is the way by which Faith is given of God, though it pleaseth him, in the superaboundings of his Goodness and Mercy, sometimes to convey or begin this Faith in the Hearts of Men by the Ministry of *chosen instruments*, who he hath fitted to co-operate with him in his own *Power*, and under his own immediate Direction and Conduct: As saith the same Apostle, “Tho’
“you have ten Thousand Instructors in Christ
“yet have ye not many *Fathers*. For in
“Christ Jesus I have begotten you through
“the Gospel.” 1st Cor. ch. 4, ver. 15.

This *Faith*, therefore, is easily understood by Mankind, of the lowest Capacities as Men, they can *feel*, and they can *bear* and *see*, and thereby become fully certain of the *Divine Object*, who gives them these Senses, who open their Eyes to see him, who otherwise is Invisible, to *feel* the sweet *influence* of his Divine *Love* and Goodness, and *bear* the soul-quickening Words of the Spirit of Life, speaking *Salvation* and *Immortality* in them, to their unutterable Joy, and Consolation.

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They then *believe*, not only respecting the coming of the Son of *God* in the *Flesh* among the *Jews* in that Day, but as *revealed in themselves* in this Day; and herein, and not in *Hearsay* only, standeth our Salvation.

This *Faith* is not only *revealed* in us as an *Effect* of the Love of God, through Christ our Saviour, but it worketh, and increaseth likewise, by *Love* on our *Part* towards God, and we prove our *Love* to him, by leaving off and denying ourselves of what we see or perceive, by his Divine Light in our Understandings to be wrong, or contrary to his Holy Will and Mind, or not *agreeable* unto the *Lord*, or his Attributes, and by our *Humility* before him, and *Obedience*, not only to all his Commandments as written in the Book, but also, to all such as we receive from the Voice of his quickening Word as manifested in our Hearts, whether in *saying*, *doing*, or *suffering* for his Name and Glory, according as he requires.

Thus *Faith* worketh, and encreaseth also, by *Obedience*; that Faith which is without *Obedience*, worketh not by Love, and is not *saving*; for, saith the Son of God, "If a Man Love me, he will keep my Words, and my Father will Love him, and we will

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" come

“ come unto him, and make our Abode with
 “ him,” John, ch. xiv, ver. 23.

True *Faith*, working by *Love*, overcomes the World, but *feigned Faith*, being Dead, is overcome by the *Spirit* of the World through many Lusts. True *Faith* overcomes all the *Lusts*, and evil Motions of the *Flesh*, and of the Eye, the evil *Passions* of the Heart and Mind are overcome, destroyed and done away thereby.

There is a *Cogent Power* and *Virtue* in this *Faith*, by which, as a *Shield*, all the fiery Darts of the *Devil* and his *Agents*, and his and their *Envy*, within and without, are quenched and repelled, according to the Doctrine of the Apostle upon an other Occasion, when describing the whole Armour of Light, the only proper Accoutrements for a Christian Warrior: This *Faith*, I say, overcomes the World, within and without, but *Historical Faith*, where there is only that, or that which comes by *Tradition only*, is overcome by the World, and the Spirit of it; how much more, therefore, are they overcome thereby, who have no Faith; which is the case of all *Persecutors*, for they who are only born after the *Flesh*, always, one way or another, by Word or Action, and often by their

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their *Laws* and *Ordinances*, *Persecute* them who are born, first after the *Flesh*, and afterward after the *Spirit*; and yet the Faithful in *Christ* (who overcame the *World* by *Suffering*), also overcame in and by him, of whom they are Born, though the *World* be full of *Enemies*, *Spiritual* and *Temporal*, and of *Spiritual Wickedness* in high *Places* and *Stations* in the *Earth*, fortified by the *Weapons* of the *Evil* one.

This Faith, the Son of God points at, where he saith, "If ye have Faith as a Grain of Mustard Seed, ye shall say unto this Mountain, Remove hence to yonder Place, and it shall Remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto you." That is to say, if we Mortals have this Faith which works by Love, whatever *Difficulties* and *Temptations*, we find in our Way and Progress, through this vexatious and troublesome *World*, it overcomes and removes them all, and smoothes our Way, so that we may walk forward to the End of our Journey to eternal Rest, without falling.

Now, as we go along, let a serious Consideration pass through every Mind this Evening, and let us Examine ourselves; what do we know of this Faith? This lays hold of the

saving Power of Christ by Love, as the same Apostle also saith in another Place, "By Grace, ye are *Saved*, through *Faith*, and that not of yourselves, it is the Gift of God," Ephes. ch. ii, ver. 8. Seeing then that Grace which saves, and that Faith by which we adhere to that Grace, are the *Gifts of God*; that Faith, Belief, or Opinion, which is only acquired any other Way is not saving.

But to go on further with what was likewise Written at another Time by the same Apostle unto the Church at *Corinth*, "Circumcision is nothing, and Uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the Commandments of God." By what Means then shall we poor Mortals, who are continually surrounded with many Weaknesses and Infirmities, keep the Commandments of God in the Perfections of them? being so far out of our Reach and Power, in the low State we find ourselves—by our Nature and Constitution? for here the Apostle saith, in Effect, that all our *Opinions* and *Religion* are vain and inavailable, unless we keep the Commandments of God, which naturally moves this Question: What are those Commandments, so needful to be observed and kept? The Son of God himself informs us, where he saith, "A New Commandment I give unto you, that ye Love

“ Love one another, as I have Loved you, that
 “ ye also Love one another. By this shall all
 “ Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye
 “ have Love one towards another.” John,
 ch. xiii, ver. 34 and 35, and ch. xv, ver. 17.
 And we are further informed likewise by the
 Apostle *John*, by the Authority of Christ ;
 “ Brethren, I write no New Commandment
 “ unto you, but an Old Commandment,
 “ which ye had from the Beginning, the Old
 “ Commandment is the Word, which we
 “ have heard from the Beginning.” 1st John,
 ch. ii, ver. 7, and 2d. John, ch. 5. John,
 ch. xii, ver. 50.

What Commandment was that (does any
 one ask) which they had from the Beginning ?
 It was the same which they had of God, from
 near the Time when they began to be his Peo-
 ple, by *Faith* in his *Promises*, under a Cove-
 nant of Works at Mount Sinai in the Wilder-
 ness, where the Ten Commandments were
 given unto them on Tables of Stone, which
 were contrary unto them, and which they could
 not keep in that degenerate State in which they
 then were, see *Exod.* ch. xix, ver. 3, 5, 6, and
 ch. xxxiv, ver. 27, and ch. xx. But God,
 who is altogether Good and Just, knowing
 their own Weakness, and how little Able they
 were rightly to perform all his Moral Com-
 mandments, though given for their Improve-
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as rational Creatures; was pleased to add another *Commandment*, upon believing and receiving whereof, their Ability to perform all the Rest, and the doing of the whole Will of the Almighty, did, and doth Depend, and without which they could not do it, but must remain in Sin, under the Breach of the Promise and Covenant they had made with and unto God.

For, sometime after they had received the Ten Commandments (and some other moral Precepts), to which they promised Obedience, God added another by the same Mediator in this Manner, “For this Commandment
 “which I Command thee this Day, is not
 “*bidden* from thee, neither is it far off: It is
 “not in Heaven, that thou shouldst say, who
 “shall go up for us to Heaven, and bring it
 “unto us, that we may hear it and do it?
 “Neither is it beyond the Sea, that thou
 “shouldst say, who shall go over the Sea for
 “us and bring it unto us, that we may hear
 “it and do it? But the *Word* is very nigh un-
 “to thee, in thy *Mouth*, and in thy *Heart*,
 “that thou mayst *do* it,” Deut. ch. xxx,
 ver. 11, &c.

This *Commandment* then they had from the Time they were in the Wilderness, that Moses and

and the seventy Elders preached by this eternal, everliving, and unchangeable *Word* and Commandment, unto them there. Numb. ch. xi, ver. 25 to 29.

This is the *Law*, which was *Light* unto the Spiritually Minded among them, and as a *Lamp* which *burned* in them, and *seasoned*, and *sanctified* all their Offerings and Services, and made them acceptable unto God: This was the *Light* to their *Steps*, and *Lantern* to their *Paths*: Their *Departure* from this, so far as that there was no *Light* in them, was the true Cause of their *Departure* from the *Law* and *Testimony* outwardly; from minding and keeping the Ten Moral Commandments of God, whereby they provoked the Lord against them, and lost his Protection and Strength, so as that, he gave them as a Prey to their Enemies, together with the Land of Promise, (for a Time) which they had justly forfeited by their Disobedience and Rebellion.

And it is very observeable, that the same which Moses calls the *Commandment* then given or declared unto that People, the Apostle calls *Christ*, for referring to the same Scripture written by Moses, he saith, "But the Righteousness, which is of Faith, speaketh on this Wise: Say not in thine Heart, who
" shall

" shall Ascend into Heaven ? (that is to bring
 " Christ down from above) or who shall Des-
 " cend into the Deep ? (that is, to bring up
 " Christ again from the Dead) but what faith
 " it ? The Word is very nigh unto thee, even in
 " thy *Mouth* and in thy *Heart*: That is the Word
 " of Faith, which we Preach." see Deut. ch.
 " xxx, ver. 14. Rom. ch. x, ver. 6, 7, and 8.
 This *Word of Faith* then is *Christ*, as he is the
Word of God, and is *God*, and the true *Light*,
 which lighteth every Man that cometh into
 the World, see John, ch. 1, ver. 9, and ch.
 xii, ver. 46, ch. iii, ver. 19.

And after the Son of God had thus esta-
 blished the Old Commandment, which had
 not only been from the beginning of the Dis-
 pensation of God to Israel, but from the
 Foundation of the World, and before all
 Worlds, and by whom all the Worlds were
 made ; he then adds *another Commandment*,
 saying, " A New Commandment I give unto
 " you, that you Love one another, as I have
 " Loved you, that ye also Love one another.
 " By this shall all Men know that ye are my
 " Disciples, if ye have Love one toward another."
 John, ch. xiii, ver. 34, 35, and ch. xv, ver.
 12, 17, 18.

This

This is a *perpetual* and *irrevocable* *Command* unto all Christians, to be taught them by Himself and his Ministers, from Generation to Generation, to the End of the World, though they may be of different Notions and Opinions, and various Ways of Thinking in some Matters of Religion, and if so, then, though I may retain some *Opinions* which thou canst not believe or receive, but thinks them *Erroneous*; yet, according to this *New Commandment*, as well as the Old, which saith, Thou shall Love thy Neighbour as thyself, thou must *Love* me if not my *Opinions*; how otherwise canst thou *love* or *please* God, whose Commandments they are, or stand justified before him in the Day of Judgement.

And, notwithstanding, thou mayst have *Sentiments* *opposite* to mine, and as I may think, altogether erroneous and contrary to Religion. I must not Hate, or Dislike thee Personally, but Love thee under the same Obligation and Penalty, for the Son of God hath not made Uniformity of *Opinions* any *Condition* to this Duty of *Social Love*. And as we cannot be *both Right*, under *opposite Sentiments*, on any Point (and peradventure both *Parties* may be *Wrong* in their Ways of Thinking), yet God loved us all whilst yet *Wrong* in our *Notions* and *Practice*, and by his Divine Grace, taught,

or would teach us, in the Gentleness and Meekness of his Holy Spirit, and so ought we, through the same Grace, to help and inform one another in the Things of God, as *Brethren in Love*, and not to *Impose* or *Obtrude* our *Sentiments* one upon another as *Lords* and *Enemies*, in *Anger*, in *Railing*, and *perverse Disputes*, and *imperious Insults*, nor in *Hate*, *Contests*, *Passions*, and *Resentments*, all which are contrary to the Christian *Faith*, *Religion* and *Spirit*, and to those *Commandments*, and *gender* to more *Ungodliness*: But we may, and ought to persuade one another in *Love*, in *Truth*; for Truth armeth with *Patience* against *Wrath* and *Error*, and angry *Contests*, and *Quarrels*: Truth hath an Eye only to the *Convincement*, *Conversion* and *Salvation*, of those we Reason with, to the *Doing* of the *Commandments* of God, and *Good* of *Souls* of every *Opinion*, and not for *Victory*, or *Conquest*, and *vain Glory* therein.

If Christians would generally come to this there would be less hurt, in our Differences in *Opinions* than now is, or heretofore hath been: But there is a numerous Sect, which not regarding the *Kingdom of Christ*, which is not of this World, but *themselves* and their own *Interests* and *Party*, have *stole* into worldly *Power* under a *Profession* of Christ, and
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Cloathed themselves with *Wordly Honours, Dignities and Glory*, which are not of God, but contrary to the Nature and End of the Kingdom of Christ, and under Pretence of being Ministers of Christ, Servants of the Church of God, exalting *Themselves* into high Places in the Earth, have *forgot* and despised the *Lord* and his *Commandments*, and Lorded over the *Heritage* of God, and the rest of Mankind, and *inventing* to themselves many *false Opinions*, have *imposed* upon them, and their own Precepts and Commands, by Force and *Violence* upon other *People*, *contrary* to the Precepts of God, and of *Jesus Christ* the Son of God, and have most uncharitably, barbarously, and inhumanly, pillaged, plundered, vilified, belied, falsely accused, and even as much they could, *murdered* and *destroyed*, all Those who *could* not, for *Conscience* toward God, *worship* their Images, and comply with their *false Opinions* and *anticristian Inventions*, whenever they have had Opportunity and Power.

These are the evil and destructive *Fruits* and Effects of that Spirit of Antichrist, who, professing Christ in *Words*, denieth him in *Works*, and being *departed* from *Christ* and this Commandment, is become his Enemy, and

an Enemy implacable to all that are Born of God by him.

But this Commandment is the living Lamp from the Holy *Anointing*, which teacheth all Things, and shining in the Soul, illuminates the *Understanding*, and fills the Heart with Divine *Love*, and Joy, which *honours* and *adores* God, and *flows* also towards Man.

If Mankind would adhere to this *Divine*, immortal *Law*, the inward Appearance of *Christ*, the Word of God, they would then have *Love* to God, and one toward another in him: But this is not to be *acquired* by any *Ability* or Contrivance of our *own* as Creatures, but as we come to *trust* in God by this *Faith*, which *Works* by *Love*.

Again, the third Time, the Apostle expresseth the same Thing in the same Epistle to the Galatians; "In Christ Jesus neither Circumcision nor Uncircumcision availeth any Thing, but a new *Creature*. And as many as Walk according to this *Rule*, Peace be on them and Mercy, and upon the *Israel* of God." Gal. ch. 6, ver. 15, 16.

Here is the Result and Perfection of all, the Way to divine and everlasting Peace and
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Reconciliation with God, to be Born again, and become a new Creature; for unless a Man be Born again, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God. And unless we believe in the Word of God, the eternal, everliving *Commandment*, as *revealed* in the Heart, we can never attain this *State* by all our own *Faculties* and *Abilities*, how strong and lucid soever they may be.

Didst thou give thyself thy Being? O vain conceited Mortal: Thou wilt justly answer No. No more canst thou bring forth Thyself in the likeness of God, in Righteousness and true Holiness. This is the Work of God, through his eternal Word, and the quickening Power of it, and not of Man: He who *quick- eneth*, and he who is *quickened*, are not the same; It is God, who of his free Will and abundant Mercy in Christ, worketh in Man; but it is Man who *believeth* in him who *Worketh*; and who, through Grace, *obeyeth*, and becomes co-worker with God in his own Salvation.

And, therefore, let every one of us enquire, and say in our own Hearts, what do I *know* of this great Work, or of this *mighty Power* he have Wrought, or is now Working in me?

A Work

A Work made so *absolutely necessary* to my Salvation by the Doctrine of the Son of God !

Some People embrace certain *Notions* and *Principles* of what they call *Religion*, by Tradition from their Parents or Teachers, in their Infancy, before they have Understanding to distinguish Truth from Error in Matters of so great Importance, and through a supine Indolence go on therein, without any farther Concern, or Search, unto old Age, and are no nearer this Change than in their first Production ; but I would not have it to be so with any one in this large Meeting this Evening.

John the Baptist was sent to preach Repentance to the *Jews*, who, though Professors of the only Religion established by Divine Authority in that Day, yet were Sinners by the Breach of their Covenant with God. And Christ and his Disciples, likewise preached the same, saying, " The Kingdom of Heaven " is at hand," as most necessary, in the first Place, for the State of that People. And it is as necessary now to preach Repentance to Mankind, professing the only True Religion established by Christ : For notwithstanding our accidental professing of it, all Men being first in a natural State, and arriving to Maturity, are generally Sinners, offending

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gainst the Law of God written in them, in one Thing or another, in the Course of Life, and have need of Repentance in this Age, as well as they had in that, and Mankind ever will have need of Repentance, from Age to Age, throughout all Generations, for the same Reason. And though it is above Seventeen Hundred Years since the Time that Christ and his Apostles preached Repentance to the Jews, and proclaimed the Kingdom of Heaven to be at Hand, yet Mankind by Nature depraved, and Sinners and Impenitent, are now as far from the Kingdom of God, and no nearer than they were, and ever will be so, until they believe in the *Word of Life*, and Repent and forsake their Sins.

But Repentance is the Gift of God, and his Work, and is not in the Power and Will of the Sinner to Repent when he pleases, Acts, ch. v, ver. 31. and ch. xi, ver. 18, and 2d. Tim. ch. ii, ver. 25, and Rom. ch. ii, ver. 4.

We can never truly repent of the Errors of our Ways and Sins, until we see and understand them to be so: For many *talk* of Sin, and confess themselves Sinners in a *Traditional* Way, who do not Repent. But O Sinful Man, whosoever thou art, hast thou ever so seen Sin in thy own Heart, and thy Understanding

standing been so convinced of thy Errors as sincerely to Repent and become sensible of the *Life of the Son of God* in thy own Soul, so as to Rule and Reign there ; that where Sin hath abounded, Grace and Truth may much more abound, to the Glory of God, and Completion of their own Salvation !

For when Man *seeth* his Sins, so as they become *exceeding Sinful* in his Sight, and his Soul heavy loaden therewith, and through Grace repenteth and forsaketh them, then by the Goodness and Mercy of God, declared in the Blood of Christ, he hath a free and full Pardon of them sealed unto him, *testified* by the Holy Spirit of Christ, by whom he is convinced that he is a Sinner. And then by the same Spirit, Man likewise *seeth* there is an absolute Necessity of being sanctified ; for though the *Acts* of Sin may be pardoned, which may have been *done* against the Commandment of God ; yet the evil *Effects*, the *Stain* and *Pollution* of Sin may, and will, remain in the Heart, 'till done away and destroyed by the Lord Jesus Christ, divinely and inwardly *revealed* and manifested : For the same Spirit that *convinceth* Man of Sin, *redeemeth* him from Sin, and all the *Defilements* of it. And being thus sanctified by the Son, we *love*, *honour*, and *obey* the *Father* and the *Son*, and love and hold fast the

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great and *living Commandment*, and truly delight in the *doing* of it. For because we then *love* God in his own *Love* we *Obey* him, for a Man will not *Obey* one he doth not *Love* but by *Compulsion*; and then he hath no *Reward*, which is not the *Way* of God with Mankind; for the whole *Salvation* of God to Mankind worketh only by *Love*. The *Father* sent, and still sendeth the *Son*, in *Love*: The *Son* suffered, and suffereth, in *Love*: The *Spirit* worketh and compleateth the immortal *Law* of *Love* and *Life* in Mankind, in the *Power* of the *Father*, who is *Love*.

I would have all to look unto *God* for *Religion* this *Way*, for this is *Religion* indeed, without with all *Nations* and *Speculations* about it, how necessary soever suited to the *Letter* of the *Scriptures* themselves, by the *Wisdom* and *Subtily* of *Man*, are vain and null, and avail nothing to the *Redemption* or *Salvation* of the *Soul*.

Let all, therefore, look to this new and living *Commandment*, and then, though at first *Appearance* it *condemns* thy *Sins* in thee, yet, as thou *Believes*, *Loves* and *Obeys* it, and art sanctified thereby, thou wilt *feel* the *Love* of God shed abroad in thy Heart, to the *Destruction* of all slavish *Fear*, and then thou wilt

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love the *Lord* the true God, with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, and Mind, which is the first and great Commandment, and thy Neighbour as thyself, which is the Second, and consequently thy whole Duty to God and Man: For on these Two depend the whole Christian Faith and Religion :—But oh ! How will too many who are *Neighbours*, professing the Holy *Christian Faith* and *Religion*, hate, belie, revile, falsely accuse, vilify, abuse, wrong, defraud, back-bite, traduce, and surmise Evil one against another, and offend, and others become Tale-bearers and Messengers of Evil among Neighbours, to the lessening and *Destruction* of all *Love* and *Peace*, and consequently of all *Virtue* and *Religion* among them : And again, how ready are many to receive those evil *Messengers* of *Sin* and *Satan*, and their false Reports, and to conceive, and take Offences thereby one against another ; and by the *Whisperings* of *Satan*, only in their own *Imaginations*, when no Offence is at all given, intended, or thought of by the Person accused.

And then how spitefully, and with mortal Anger, Rage, Hatred, Malice, and Revenge, will the Offended resent the Injuries or imagined Injuries done them, so as never to be

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reconciled the Parties offending, or being Innocent, supposed to have Offended.

The Habitations of all such are far from God, they are in the Gall of Bitterness, and, in that State, the *Disciples* and *Friends* of the *Evil one*, and not of the Truth, and their Profession (as to themselves) is a continual Lie.

And yet, such is the Goodness and Mercy of the Father in the Son, that when the thro' Reproofs and Rebukes of his Holy Spirit in their Intervals and calm Times (for such they are favoured with), they see themselves, feel the Load of their Sins, want Redemption, *believe* in the *Son of God*, cry earnestly for Salvation; to be relieved from under the heavy Yoke of Satan and their own Lusts, then the Lord heareth from Heaven, his Dwelling-Place, and hath Compassion upon them.

And then, through the Operation of the Spirit of the Son of God, they come to be born again, of the Nature of him who never fell, but laid down his Life for Mankind whilst yet Enemies in the Image, and Nature of the first Adam, who fell from his first State, and then all those Evils are done away and destroyed: And then the Old Man, with all

those Evils, is put off, and the New, with all his Righteousness, Holiness, and Truth, is put on, to our everlasting Reconciliation with God our Father, and one with another in him, and to our compleat Restoration and Establishment for ever, above all Temptation or fear of any future Fall.

It is written in the Holy Scripture, you know, as the Doctrine of Christ, that unless a Man be born again, he cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven; nevertheless, though by his Doctrine it is declared impossible for Mankind to be saved in the fallen State of the first Adam, yet all Things being possible with God, he hath revealed a Way whereby all Mankind may be saved.

When a Man is convinced in his Heart of any particular Sin, by which he hath often been overcome, and which hath been unto him as a right Hand, or Eye, and which he hath, at length, seen, through the *divine Light* in his Understanding, to be Evil, and in his own Strength, strove against it, but in vain, and concludes it impossible for him ever to resist it; yet, as he believeth in that *Light*, and turneth his *Mind inward toward it*, there is sufficient Power and Virtue therein, to overcome the Evil, how powerful soever, as is said of

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God, who is that Light, " That he worketh
 " in you, both to Will, and to do of his good
 " Pleasure. And yet we must be co-workers
 " with him of our own Salvation, and that
 " with Fear and Trembling." Phil. ch. ii,
 ver. 12, 13. And then we do not only *believe*,
 but *see*, and *feel*, by happy *Experience*, what
 God, the Lord is able and willing to do, and
 hath done and finished in us, and for us, our
 compleat Redemption and establishment for
 ever. And as it is also written, concerning
 them who are gone before unto Glory; " Not
 " by Works of Righteousness which we have
 " done, but according to his Mercy he saved
 " us, by the washing of Regeneration, and
 " renewing of the Holy Ghost." Tit. ch. iii,
 ver. 5. And again, " By Grace ye are saved,
 " through Faith, and that not of yourselves,
 " it is the Gift of God." Ephes. ch. ii. ver. 8.

And thus as he likewise, through the same
 Mercy, opened unto us the way of Regena-
 tion, by which we too may be fitted for a full
 Entrance into the same Glory, and Inheritance,
 which fadeth not, at the Conclusion of our
 Days, if through the same Grace, and Faith-
 fulness thereunto, we hold out to the End.

This is a great Privilege and Advancement
 indeed, for the Children of the first *Adam* to
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be born of the second *Adam*, and for ever established in him immortal. The first *Adam* you have heard, was made a living Soul, but the second *Adam* is not made, but begotten of the Father and his quickening Spirit. The first *Adam* was of the Earth and was Earthly, but the second *Adam* is the Lord of Heaven. To the first *Adam* under the Offence, the Creator said, "Dust thou art, and unto Dust thou shalt return;" but abundance of Grace being revealed through *Jesus Christ*, the second *Adam*, it is also written, the Hour is coming, and now is, when the Dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. John, ch. v, ver. 25.

In hearing, therefore, the Divine Voice of the all-quickening Spirit of the Son of God, and *believing therein*, we come to live unto God, and no more unto ourselves, and it is also written, *The Just shall live by Faith*. And being born of God, in our inner Man, that *Law*, and Commandment which was so contrary to the Propensity of our Nature, and seemed impossible to be performed by us, whilst the Nature of the first *Adam* bare rule in us, becomes a *Law of Nature* unto us, when born of the *Life* and *Nature* of the second *Adam*, and his Holy Spirit becomes *Life-Eternal* in us; and being thus reconciled

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unto the Father, through the Mediator (and proper Medium) ordained of God to that End; then, and not till then, we *love God*, and the *Lord Jesus Christ*, our Saviour, above ourselves, and above all Mankind, and Things, our Neighbours, and all Men, as we ought according to the Commandment of God.

Thus I speak concerning what Mankind may and ought to be, according to the Doctrine of Christ and the Gospel, and hope there are divers in my Audience who, thro' Grace, do experience the Truth of these Things. We have all, I doubt not, learned of Christ, by his Grace, in some measure; but they who have learned most of all, may still learn more and more, of him whose Wisdom is inexhaustible and Power boundless, in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, and who would have all Men to *believe* in him, and learn of him, who is the new and living Commandment, and be saved.

Oh! that every Soul of us here present may come to know the living Effects of the saving Power of Christ in ourselves; that my Soul might see that Day before I depart out of this Tabernacle (and I do see as a far off), that
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this *Love* may *abound* in and among *all Parties* and *Opinions*; for having, through infinite *Mercy*, tasted of the Goodness of God, I can the readier believe, that he worketh, and will yet work the same Things, and much more abundantly, in many more, and will yet exalt the Dignity and Power of his own holy Name, and glorify his own Arm in every Nation, Tongue, and People throughout the World: For the Son of God hath said of himself, "All Power in Heaven and on Earth is given unto me." Seeing then the Son of God hath all Power, the Evil one hath *no Power*, but what the Children of Men may give him over themselves, by yielding to his Temptations; as saith the Apostle, "His Servants ye are to whom ye yield yourselves Servants to obey, whether of the Sin unto Death, or of Obedience unto Righteousness."

The Son of God having *all Power*, is the compleat Saviour indeed; he is able to save to the very uttermost, all who come unto God by him; and therefore the Adversary is no thing before him, cannot stand at his Approach; even as *Darkness* cannot stand before the *Light*, or Night when the Sun approacheth, and ariseth in his Strength and Glory.

If therefore you *believe* in the *Son of God*, in his divine and inward Appearance, he is both *willing* and *able* to relieve your Souls, from under the heavy Yoke of the *Evil* one and of *Sin*, according to his own gracious Invitation and Counsel, "Come unto me all ye who Labour, and are heavy Laden, and I will give you Rest. Take my Yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meak and low in Heart, and ye shall find Rest unto your Souls, for my Yoke is easy and my Burden is light." Matt. ch. xi, ver. 28, 29, and 30.

Thus *believing* and *obeying* the Son of God, we may all be brought forth in his *Image* and *Nature*, in Righteousness and true Holiness, that the great Adversary (great I say, through the too ready and willing Submission and Obedience poor deluded Mankind yield unto him who cannot compel them), may be disappointed, defeated and dethroned, and Christ, whose Right it is, may be exalted and reign.

Then we shall all have but *one Lord*, and *one Faith*, and all be under *one Baptism*, and all drink into *one Spirit*, as of old; for the true Cause why Mankind, professing the one *true God*, and the *one Lord Jesus Christ*, cannot love one

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another

another as they ought, is, because they are *not baptized* by the *one Spirit* into *one Body*, and they are not baptized by one Spirit, because they do not *believe* in him.

The *Baptism* of Christ is the *Act* of the holy *Spirit of Christ*, in the Heart and Mind, whereby we are sanctified, justified, redeemed, and saved from all Sin, and impurity of Flesh and Spirit, and the shedding abroad and influence of *Divine Love*, sensibly and plentifully in us; for, according to the Doctrine of the Gospel, Christ himself is the great Baptizer of Souls, by his holy Spirit, though he sometimes makes such as he inspires to that End, instrumental therein, as co-workers with him in that great Work.

This is he, who according to John the Baptist, baptizeth with the Holy Ghost, and with Fire. This is he, the Son and Lord, who remaineth in the House, the Church of God forever, when the Dispensation of the Servant is ended.

And therefore, let the Profession of Mortals be what it will, and our *Notions* of the most lively *Images* drawn from the Doctrines in the holy Scriptures, or the *subtle Reasons* and Imaginations of Men upon them

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till we *believe* in *Christ* as *inwardly revealed*, and be *baptized* of *him* there, and *washed* by him in the inside, and *Drink* into his holy Spirit, we are no Members of his Church, which is his Body, Bone of his Bone, and Flesh of his Flesh, or of one Spirit with him, nor otherwise any Part or Lot in him or with him.

Let us all therefore wait for this great and glorious Baptizer of Souls with Divine and *Holy Fire*. But what is this Fire say the unexperienced Professors? I have heard of some even of old, professing the Christian Faith and Religion, and yet so very Ignorant of it, and so far from the Truth, as to stigmatize their Profelytes with hot Irons, calling that the Baptism of the Holy Ghost with Fire; but the holy Scripture declares what that Fire is, “Is not my Word as a Fire, saith the Lord, and as a Hammer which breaketh the Rock in pieces.” Jer. ch. xxiii, ver. 29. This Word, in the Scripture Language, compared unto various Things, according to his different Manifestations and Operations; if thy Heart be so hardened, and thy Soul be so laden through Sin and Unbelief, that thou canst not so much as breathe unto God, in Prayer, or look toward him with desire, yet this *Hammer* is able to *break* it in *Pieces*, and this divine, powerful, and holy *Fire*, the *Spi-*

rit of this great *Baptizer*, destroys and does away all manner of Obstructions and Impurities, out of the Hearts and Minds of Mankind, when manifested in them, as it is said of him, "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his Temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in; behold he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts: But who may abide the Day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a *Refiner's Fire*, and like Fullers Soap, and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of Silver." Mal. chap. iii, ver. 1, 2, 3. And again, John answered, saying unto them all, "I indeed baptize you with Water, but one mightier than I cometh, the Latchet of whose Shoes I am not worthy to unloose: He shall baptize you with the *Holy Ghost*, and with *Fire*, whose Fan is in his Hand, and he shall *thoroughly purge* his Floor, and will gather the Wheat into his Garner, but the Chaff he will burn with Fire unquenchable." Luke, ch. iii, ver. 16, 17.

Here is a plain Description of this glorious Baptizer, he is the Lord, the desire of all Nations, sought of all the diseased for healing Virtue, and of all the unclean for Purification. His *Baptism* is with the pure holy *Flame* of

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his *living Word*. This is he who cleaneth his Floor fully, gathereth his Wheat into his Garner, and destroyeth the Chaff with *unquenchable Fire*, though conate with the Wheat, and brought up with it. Here is that divine *Virtue* and *Power* which initiates the Soul of Man into the Church of the *first Born*, written in Heaven. This is that *Wisdom* and eternal divine *Power*, which all the holy Angels in Heaven worship and adore, and which perfects the Spirits of the Just, and fits them for heavenly Places.

I wish with all my Soul, according to the Measure of that *Love*, which I have *felt* moving and flowing in my Heart in this Meeting, that every one here might come unto *this Baptism*, that we might all be *Members* of this *one Body*, of which Christ the Lord is the only Head. *The Church which is his Body, the fullness of him who filleth all in all*: This *Love* constrains those who are favoured with divine *Touches*, and *Influence* of it in their Hearts, to wish, that all *Mankind* might *thus believe* in the Son of God, and be *baptized* with this *Baptism*, according to the *Command of Christ*, and *Mission* of his Apostles to all Nations; when he said unto them, “Go teach all Nations, baptizing them into the *Name of the Father*, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them

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“ to observe all Things whatsoever I have
 “ commanded you, and lo, I am with you
 “ always unto the End of the World : Go
 “ ye into all the World, and preach the Gos-
 “ pel to every Creature. He that believeth
 “ and is baptized, shall be Saved ; but he
 “ that believeth not shall be Damned ; and
 “ behold I send the Promise of my Father
 “ upon you ; but tarry ye in the City of Je-
 “ rusalem, untill ye be endowed with Power
 “ from on High ; for John truly baptized with
 “ Water, but ye shall be baptized with the
 “ Holy Ghost, not many Days hence ; but
 “ ye shall receive Power after that the Holy
 “ Ghost is come upon you : and ye shall be
 “ Witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and
 “ in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the
 “ uttermost Part of the Earth.” See Matt. ch.
 xxviii, ver. 19, 20. Mark, ch. xvi, ver. 15,
 16. Luke xxiv, ver. 49. Acts, ch. i, ver.
 4, 5, and 8.

The *temporary Baptism* of John, and the *per-*
manent Baptism of the Son of God, are so clearly
contradistinguished, the former with Water, and
 the latter with the Holy Spirit, that he that
 hath an Eye to see, may see, that *Water Bap-*
tism is so far from being *here commanded*, that
 it is here forever *superceeded* and *ended*, as
 any manner of *Obligation thereto* in the Church

of Christ, this *Baptism* of the *Holy Ghost*, being that only which Christ sent his Disciples or *Apostles* to *declare* unto the World, in his own *Spirit* and *Power*, as *necessary* to their Salvation, and which they are to believe and receive on pain of *Damnation*, or of them to whom *Christ* is *preached*, by the *Wisdom* and *Power* of the *Holy Ghost*.

First of all, Christ was to be preached unto by the *Jews*, as to his coming in the *Flesh* unto them, and his *Apostles* were first to be his *Witnesses* as to that; that the *fulfilling* of all the *Promises* of God to that People, might be made *manifest* and *proved*.—And that being fully done, they then were directed, and enabled, to bear Testimony unto him, and *preach* him to all *Nations*, as the *Light* of the *World*, he being always with them, and in them, *baptizing* with his *Holy Spirit*; but not every one who *heard* their *Doctrine*, but every one who *heard* the *Word*, that is himself, as he said to the *Jews*, “Why do you not understand my Speech, even because you cannot hear my Word.” John, ch. viii, ver. 43.

Such as were sensible of the *hidden Influence* of his invisible *Power*, and from that Foundation *believed*; upon such he poured forth his
Holy

Holy Spirit, as the immediate *Evidence* and *Consequence* of their *Faith*, and Sanctification and Justification of their Souls ; and to the Completion of their Salvation in a progressive manner. John, ch. vii, ver. 38.

For the *Baptism* of the *Holy Ghost* is the coming of the *Holy Spirit* of Christ upon such as hear the *Gospel* preached in its true *Autho- rity*, and *believe*, and is as one Act in preaching Christ, in the *Demonstration* of his own *Wisdom* and *Power*, and this Manifestation and *Baptism*, is that which is meant and intended by the *Washing* of *Regeneration* and *renewing* of the *Holy Ghost* : And why the renewing of the *Holy Ghost* ? Because all Nations, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, were departed, in a great Degree, if not totally, from the Knowledge of the *Truth*, and *Spirit* of God, unto the Knowledge of whom, they were to be restored and renewed; and this is the Dispensation of the *Gospel* still and will ever continue to be so to Mankind though for a time (untill the *Mystery* of *Iniquity* in the *Kingdom* of *Antichrist* be fully made manifest) it hath been obscured and clouded, by *Antichristian* Subtilty, and *Darkness*.

He that is *baptized* of *Christ*, hath the *Evidence* of it in himself, his Heart is often melted

melted by the holy Influence of *Divine Love*, and his Eyes overflows with Floods of many Tears, arising from that *consolating Cause*, and often when alone, under the *sensible Operation* of *Divine Wisdom* and *Power*, which all the Water on the Globe can never produce or effect, by *whom*, or in what *Manner*, or *Name*, or *Names*, in *Words*, or to whatsoever *Subjett* administered or applied.

For this Baptism is effected by the holy Influence of the Flame of *living Divine Love*, the Soul that is the Subject of this *Baptism*, being thereby sanctified, becomes a *true Member* of the *Church* and *Body of Christ*, of which himself is *Head*, not of a *Dead Body*, but of that which is *Alive*; for every Member of the *Body of Christ* is living. As saith the Apostle, "The Life which I now live, is by Faith in the Son of God." This Baptism, consequential to this Faith, is effected by the same Power that raised the *Body of Christ* himself from the dead, the eternal, quickening Spirit, and Power of the Father. Gal. ch. iii, ver. 20.

And I would have all to take especial Notice of this, that seeing the Son of God is *always with* and in his *Church* and *People*, thus baptized by him, whether immediately or indirectly.

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strumentally, he neither *needeth*, nor *appointeth* any *Representative*, *Vicegerent*, *Vicar*, or other *Head upon the Earth*, to exercise any *Authority* or *Rule* over them. So that it is an Antichristian Usurpation in any Man, or Order of Men, and contrary to the Command of Christ, to set up him and themselves *over the Church of Christ*, under any *Pretence* whatsoever. Nor are any set of Men whomsoever, *Successors* of the *Apostles* of Christ, as *Ministers* in his Church, but those only who *succeed* in some Degree of the same divine Power; as *called*, *fitted*, or *ordained*, by *Christ himself* unto that Service, such are *Servants* indeed, in the *House of God*, and not *Masters*.

Nor is it at all in the Nature of a *Christian Ministry*, nor can it ever answer the great End of it, to pass by *Succession* and *Tradition* only, by any human *Power*, *Rites*, *Abilities*, or *Qualifications* whatever. Nor doth even the *Christian Religion* itself, so succeed, but both it, and its Ministry do, and will proceed as the *immediate Work* of Christ, the true God, from Age to Age, throughout all Generations.

For as from the Beginning, that was not first which was *Spiritual*, but that which was *Natural*, and afterward that which is *Spiritual*; or, in other Words, all Mankind in our first Production into this World, are in

State of Nature, in the first *Adam* only, and as many, as from the Beginning of the World, have *believed*, do believe, or shall believe in the *Spirit of Christ*, under whatever *Notion*, *Name*, or *Character*, and have obeyed him, so far as he hath been, is, or shall be manifested in them, or their Duty made known by his divine *Light*, and performed; they have been, are, and shall be, thereby, in some Degree, renewed, changed, and saved by the Son of God, in the infinite Mercy and Goodness of the *Father*.

For as the whole created human Nature suffered a Lapse, or Degeneracy, in the Root, and all Mankind succeeding from thence, partaking of that Defect; though the greatest Part of them never heard of *Adam*, or knew any thing of his *Fall*, even so, many have had, and shall have Salvation by Christ, the Son of God, the second *Adam*, as divinely made manifest in them, who never have heard, or shall hear any thing of his coming in the flesh, as born of the Virgin, or under the Name or Character of Jesus Christ.

For the Promises of God to all Nations (the Jews excepted) were, and are without their knowledge, and yet shall stand and be accomplished, though few, in Comparison, have

ever heard, or shall hear of it in Form, which is after this Manner; "They shall not hurt
 "nor destroy in all my holy Mountain; for
 "the Earth shall be *full* of the *Knowledge* of
 "the *Lord*, as the Waters cover the Sea; and
 "in that Day there shall be a Root of *Jesse*,
 "which shall stand for an Ensign of the Peo-
 "ple, to it shall the *Gentiles* seek, and his Rest
 "shall be Glorious. Isa. ch. xii, ver. 9, 10.

Again, "Behold my Servant whom I up-
 "hold, mine *Elect* in whom my Soul delight-
 "eth, I have put my *Spirit* upon him, he
 "shall bring forth Judgment to the *Gentiles*."
 Isa. ch. xlii, ver. 1 and 6. "I the Lord
 "have called thee in Righteousness, and will
 "hold thine Hand, and will keep thee, and
 "give thee for a *Covenant* of the *People*, for
 "the *Light* of the *Gentiles*." Again, "And
 "he said, It is a light Thing that thou shouldst
 "be my *Servant*, to raise up the *Tribes* of *Jac-*
 "*ob*, and to restore the preserved of *Israel*;
 "will also give thee for a *Light* to the *Gent-*
 "*iles*, that thou mayst be my *Salvation* to the
 "*End* of the *Earth*." See Isa. ch. xlix, ver. 6
 and 22, ch. lx, ver. 3, 5, 11, and Jer. ch. xvi
 ver. 19, and Mal. ch. i, ver. 11.

Now it would be an unworthy Detraction
 from the extensive unlimited Goodness and
 Mercy

Mercy of the Great God, in any one to think, that none should have the Benefit of these Promises of the Almighty, but only such as have heard, or shall *formerly* hear of them in *vocal* Language in any Form; for though they lay hid from everlasting in the Mind of the most High, until revealed unto the Prophets, and then remained recluse in the Scripture, for Ages, among the Jews, until the coming of the Son of God, yet the Gentiles had the Advantage of them, in some sort or measure, from the Beginning, according to the Hint given by the Apostle Paul, where he saith, "The Mystery which hath been hid for Ages, and from Generations, but now is made manifest to his Saints, to whom God would make known what is the Riches of the Glory of this *Mystery* among the *Gentiles*, which is *Christ in you*, the Hope of Glory." Col. ch. i, ver. 26, 27.

And as the human Nature is but *one Thing*, consisting of many particulars, multiplied from *one Root*, the *Whole* shall be saved at *last*, by Virtue of the Substantial Union with the Divine Nature (which likewise is but one), through Christ, the Mediator between God and Man; and *none* shall be *lost*, but the Son of *Perdition*; and such as finally apostatize from *God*, and become *one* with the *Evil* one. John, ch. 17,

ch. 17, ver. 2, 12, and see that Chapter throughout.

Now, notwithstanding what I have said above, concerning the Weakness, Invalidity, or Nullity of *Tradition* in the *Christian Religion*, or Ministry, I own, and am certain, that so much of the Holy Scripture as is Extant, being originally the Dictates of the Holy Spirit of Christ, they have been, are, and ever will throughout all Ages, be of great, and the greatest *traditional* and instrumental Use, Help and Service, next to the *Spirit* himself, as brought to Remembrance by him, and *opened* and used under his *own Conduct* and Direction, in the Hands, Hearts, and Understandings of his *true Ministers*, of his own choosing, raising, inspiring, qualifying, and ordaining, who have hitherto, in every Generation, been hated, contradicted, opposed, vilified, belied, persecuted, murdered, and many Ways destroyed, by the *traditional Ministers* of *Antichrist*, and of Men and Nations *deceived* by him; and them, through the subtle Working of that Wisdom, which is from beneath, which is sensual, earthly, and devilish. James ch. iii, ver. 15.

As saith the Apostle, "They who are the
"Children of the Flesh, these are not the

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“Children of God, but the Children of the Promise are counted for the Seed.” Rom. ch. ix, ver. 8, “Now we, Brethren, as Isaac was, are the Children of Promise.” Gal. ch. iv, ver. 28. Again, “Then Jesus said unto them, yet a little while is the *Light* with you : walk while ye have the *Light*, least Darknes come upon you : For he that walketh in Darknes, knoweth not whither he goeth ; while ye have *Light*, believe in the *Light*, that ye may be the Children of *Light*.” John, ch. xii, ver. 35, 36, Again, “Ye are all the Children of *Light*, and the Children of the *Day*.” 1st. Thes. ch. v, ver. 5. “But as then, he that was born after the *Flesh*, persecuted him that was born after the *Spirit*, even so it is *now*.” Gal. ch. iv, ver. 29.

But though, hitherto, it hath been so, and still is, it shall not remain so for ever ; for the end of the *Power of Antichrist*, and his *Mystery* approacheth quickly, when his Subtilty shall be made manifest and destroyed, by the Brightness of the Revelation, and Manifestation of the *Son of God*, whose *Wisdom, Kingdom, and Glory*, shall supercede all Kingdoms on earth, and by the transcending thereof, ob- scure all Glories, and the Name of Glories ; the Brightness of the *Sun* in the Day-time, secureth every *Star* as though they were not, and

and yet destroyeth none, nor hindereth any from shining, or moving in its own Orbit or Sphere.

Now that you and I, and all that *believe*, and shall believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, and call upon the Name of the Father by him, and even those also yet afar off, of every *Sect* under Heaven, may all be carried forward from *Faith* to *Faith*, and baptized by the Holy Spirit of *Christ*, and thereby made living *Members* of his Holy *Body*, the Church; that we may eat and drink and sup with him, as Children of our Father, at his holy Table, in his heavenly Kingdom, here, so far as our present Mode of being will allow, and to all Eternity hereafter, in the Fullness of his unspeakable Glory, where we shall sing Dominion and Praise to God, and the Lamb our Saviour, forever and ever, is my sincere Prayer unto him, and End of my Labour and Travel, through the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

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